Father's Day...

Introduction

Leaders, you need to be sensitive and aware that not all dads fit the stereotype that advertising and society might portray, e.g. driving big cars, wood-working and loving the outdoors etc. There are many dads that work within the home and have different sorts of jobs such as teachers, homemak-ers, nurses, child care workers etc. You will also need to know your families and their situations as not all children will be living in a 'nuclear' family and some may not live at home with their dad at all. So even though we are looking at 'fathers' day it is probably a good idea to be celebrating the important men in our lives generally, and that might include grandpas, teachers, special uncles or close friends etc. Some of the language throughout the lesson may just refer to dads, but please insert the language that will be specific and sensitive to each child's situation.

Lots of the activities in these sessions can also be used in a Mother's Day lesson or another specific 'person's day', so when you come to celebrating these as a group you might like to go back to this lesson if there are particular activities you might like to include.

Activity Spot

Mars Bar cars: Using mini Mars Bars, Smarties, some melted chocolate and Tiny Teddy biscuits, create a Mars Bar car. Encourage children to attach four Smarties with some melted chocolate, to the each side corner of the Mars Bar as the wheels. You may wish to encourage the younger children to count the wheels as they are placing them onto the car. Place a Tiny Teddy into the top of the Mars Bar as the driver and a Smartie where you think the steering wheel would go. You might like to make these in preparation for a celebration time with the special men in the children's lives.

Car Play Mat: Provide a mat that has a map design with roads, houses and community buildings printed on it along with some small cars. If you do not have a mat you may be able to borrow one from a family that attends your program or a toy library nearby. Set the mat up and encourage the children to interact with the cars on the mat. You may also like to add some blocks, animals or people to this area.

Suggestions...

In the lead up to Father's Day you might like to have a full week using some of the activities set out in the curriculum and then, the following week, use the 'Extra Spot' idea along with a few of the left-over activities to fill out the special planned activity to celebrate fathers and other significant men.

Duplo: Using duplo or other types of building blocks, encourage the children to build a garage or building, the sort of building where their dad works or perhaps even a race track.

Book corner: Choose a variety of books that are based around children's relationships with their fathers, uncles, grandfathers, brothers or another significant positive male role model in the lives. Set the area up in a way that will be inviting to the children to want to come and look at the pictures and explore the books together. Maybe place some coloured mats or bean bags on the ground near the books.

Dress-ups: Have a range of dress-ups available for the children to dress up just like their dad or another special man that they may know (grandfather, friend). Encourage the children to think about what some of their dads may do during the day. It may be the job that dad goes off to or something that he might do at home. They may want to dress up as their dad's favourite sporting team or in a sport that their dad plays (football, soccer, tennis etc.).

Bottle Top Letters: (This activity will need the help of an adult and may be suitable for those children who are engaging with letter recognition.) Write individual letters on bottle tops (e.g. milk bottle tops) and place them in a water tray or large bucket. Have the children along with their supporting adult, scoop out the letters they need to make up the name 'Dad' or the name of someone special in their life. You might like to have a sheet of plastic attached to the table with some of these words written on it so that the children can match them.

Game Spot

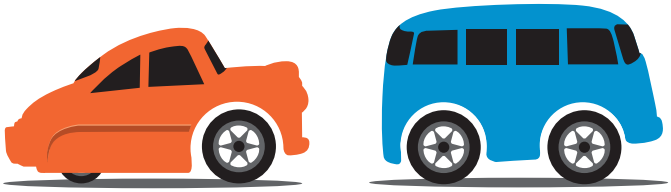
Dress-up Relays: Place the children in teams and provide each team with a helmet, gloves and driving goggles. The aim is for each child to take turns getting dressed in the gear, then run to the end of the room and back, then take off their gear and then the next child does the same. The first team to finish wins.

Race track: Create a race track around the room with boxes and cones. Using some larger cars or trucks, have the children race around the track and time them. Time them against themselves aiming for their own 'personal best'.

Fishing game: Cut out some coloured shapes and laminate them. Attach a paper clip to each of the shapes. Using masking tape, stick one of string to a chopstick and the other end to a magnet. Supply a container to fish the shapes from and encourage the children to 'go fishing'. As they fish out their shape, talk to the child about what shape it is.

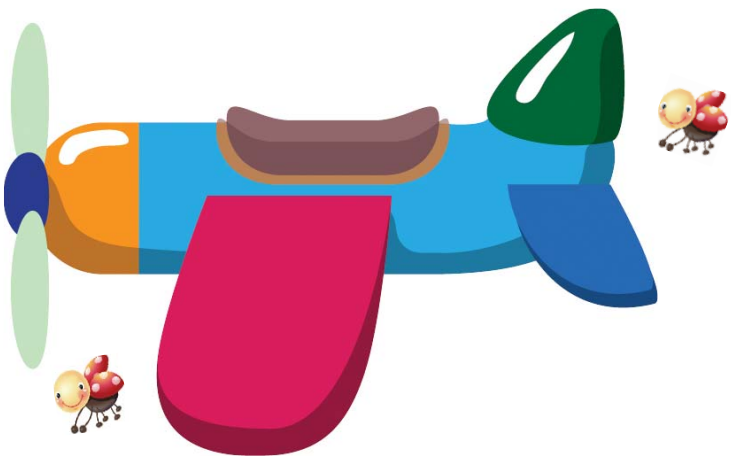
Creating Spot

Making Cars: For this activity you will need some large cardboard boxes, paints, paper plates, string/ribbon, scissors and sticky tape or glue. Open the top and the bottom of the box so that a child can stand through it and hold it up around their waist. The child may wish to paint and decorate the box. Attach some paper plates for the wheels, puncture some holes through the back and front of the car and thread some string through (enough to go over the child's shoulders). They may wish to make a number plate for the front and back of the car. Provide some different coloured paint so that they have choices as to what type of car they want. A pink sports car or maybe a red or green sedan! You may like to have children work together at this activity—this might work in family groupings.



No 1. Dad Trophy: Provide two cardboard coffee cups. Place one cup upside down on the table then glue the second cup (right way up) on top of the base. Attach some cardboard handles on both sides of the top cup. It should resemble a trophy. The children may wish to decorate the cup with a sticker that you have prepared for them that says 'No. 1 Dad' or another saying about their dad or special person in their life. Some glitter and foil would also work really well in decorating this special trophy.

'About My Dad' Card: (This activity will need to be done along with an adult that can help to fill in the spaces provided for the children's responses.) You will need an A3 piece of paper that will eventually look like a front page of a newspaper. Type up a headline and have them cut out into strips so that the children can stick them onto their sheet. Encourage the children to make some suggestions as to how they would like to complete the following phrases: 'My Dad is a ……' (super hero, legend etc.) or 'My Friend is a ……'. In one column you will need to add a frame where the children can draw their fathers or special friends. In the other column you will need the following half-written poem that the children (along with their supporting adult) can make suggestions about how they would like to complete about their father or other significant male in their life.



On Father's Day, I think of you and all the SUPER things you do. I love it when we get to _____together. You are so good at _____ . If I could give you any present in the whole world, I think it would be _____ .Thank you for _____ .

Story Spot

There are a range of books that help us to celebrate our dads and talk about the fun we have with them and how we love them. Below are some suggestions of books that you might like to use over the two weeks or have available for a reading corner or borrowing.

The Ten Best Things About My Dad: The main character in this book talks about all the fun things his dad does that makes him special. The father reads stories, scares away the monsters, tells jokes and teaches him right from wrong. It is the perfect book to read as you celebrate Father's Day because the children can relate to the young narrator in the story. 'I wonder what makes your dad special. Thank you, God, for this special person in my life.'

The Night Before Father's Day: This story uses the same lyrical rhyme of the beloved 'The Night Before Christmas'. A mother and her children surprise the dad by cleaning out the garage and washing the car. This story is an introduction to showing children the special things they might like to do for their father on Father's Day. 'I wonder what you might like to do to surprise the special person in your life.'

Just Me and My Dad: This classic critter book shows the tale of a father and sons camping trip. Along the way the little critter makes some mistakes but manages to turn things around. It's a delightful story that shows children that there are men in their lives that will be there to help and support them. 'I wonder if you planed a trip with your dad or special person where you would go or what you would do. Thank you, God, for the fun that I can have with my dad or special friend.'

What Dads Can't Do: This fun and amusing picture book talks about the things that dads cannot do that regular people can. Such as, they can push but cannot swing, they cannot cross the street without holding hands and they cannot sleep late. The children will love the illustrations as well as coming up with their own ideas of what their dad cannot do. 'Thanks, God, for dads that help us and do lots of stuff with us.'

Guess How Much I Love You?: 'Guess how much I love you,' says Little Nutbrown Hare. Little Nutbrown Hare shows his daddy how much he loves him: as wide as he can reach and as far as he can hop. But Big Nutbrown Hare, who can reach farther and hop higher, loves him back just as much. Then Little Nutbrown Hare loves him right up to the moon, but that's just half the way Big Nutbrown Hare loves him. This is a great book to use to explore how much we love the special people in our lives. It is also a great book to use for actions and participation from the children.
'I wonder if you can show me how much you love your dad… I know someone who loves you even more than that, I wonder if you know who. Yep, God. He loves you so, so much. He loves the wonderful creation he has made—YOU!'

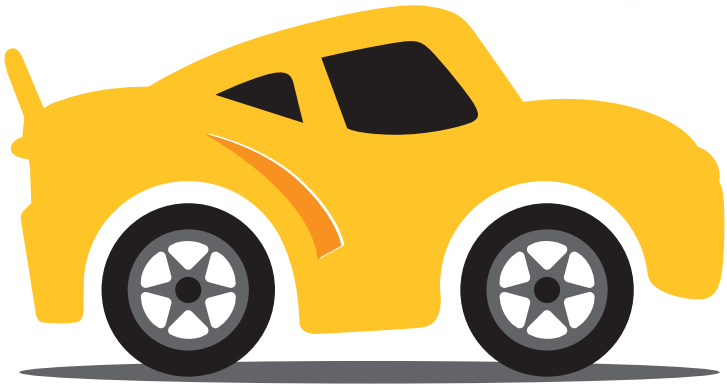
Object lesson: For this story you will need a box, petrol card or voucher, some car oil, some water, a tyre of some sort and a car service manual.

'Today we are thinking about and celebrating our dads and other special men that we might have in our lives. My dad has a car and, to keep the car safe so that he can drive us around in it, he needs to make sure there are things that help the car run smoothly (no one wants to drive around in a bumpy car). In my box here I have some things that help my dad do this.'

Take out the petrol car or voucher. 'With this voucher my dad can buy petrol for the car. He has to fill the car up with petrol so that the car has energy and it can drive on the roads. I wonder what gives you energy and helps you to run and play and learn and have fun with your dad. Food: yep, that's right, we need food to give us energy and do all the things throughout our day just like a car needs petrol to keep it going.'

Take out the car oil: 'Well, my dad puts oil into the engine of the car so that the engine will run really smoothly—it helps to care for the engine and keep it running well. I wonder if there is anyone that helps to keep you running well. It reminds me of how my Dad looks after me at times to help me keep running well, looking after me and caring for me. Why? Because he loves me.'

Take out the water: 'Some water, of course. All cars need some water. They need some water so that the engine doesn't get too hot and overheat, the water cools the engine down. My dad also washes his car with soap and water and makes it all clean. My dad makes sure that I drink lots of water because my body needs water also to stay cool and to help make me grow. I also need water to have a bath with and wash myself. When I was a little girl, my dad would always run my bath for me and put lots of bubbles in the water to help me stay clean, and have fun along the way. Why did he do this? Because he loves me.'



Tyres: 'I wonder how many tyres we need on our cars? (Count with the children) 1, 2, 3, 4. I can remember one day my dad's car getting a flat tyre. Dad had to take the tyre off the car and take it to the tyre man and get the tyre patched and then pumped up with air so that it would work again. This can remind me of how much my dad loves me. He pumps me up not with air but with special words that can make me feel good. He says things like, "I love you", "You look nice today", "Wow that's a special picture you have drawn," and lovely words like that. My dad pumps me up with words of love. Why? Because he loves me.'

Service: 'I have here in my box a car service manual. Every time my dad takes the car to the mechanics to get serviced or fixed, the mechanic fills in this book to tell my dad what they did to help the car run better. I wonder where you might go to help you feel better. I wonder when you are sick who looks after you and cares for you and who takes you to the doctors. Why? Because my dad loves me and he doesn't like it when I get sick.'

'Dad looks after me because he loves me and wants what is best for me. It is not only my dad that wants these things for me but God also—he loves me and wants the best for me too, even more than my dad. God wants us to be well and enjoy all the wonderful creations that he has made, he wants what is best for us and that's why He made mums and dads and other special people to help look after us. A little bit like how a dad looks after a car. Thanks, God, and thanks to dads, too.'

Language

I love you dad/daddy
I love…
I love you because…
When I go driving…
My dad is…
Together we can…
Hugs
Caring
Helping

Mat Time Spot

'Toot Toot, Chugga Chugga, Big Red Car'
'The Wheels on the Bus'
'Roary'
'Take you Riding in my Car Car'
'It's so Nice to Have a Cuddle'

Prayer Spot

For this prayer activity you will need some paper plates that can be used as 'prayer wheels'. As you chat about the sections below, encourage the adults to help the children draw their dad's face on their prayer wheel. At the top of the picture, write the words, 'Thank you, God, for dads' or 'Thank you God for …'. When each of the children has their prayer wheel, play some music and have the children drive around the room. When the music stops, get the children to freeze and yell out 'Thank you, God, for dads' or 'Thank you, God, for…' Start the music again and drive around the room—when you freeze the second time, ask the children, 'I wonder what you love about your dad'. Allow them to share and then yell out together, 'Thank you, God, for…' again. Repeat.

Take Home Spot

The Take Home Spot below is one that can be encouraged over two weeks if needed, especially if there is more than one child in the family.

One-on-one time: Spend some time this week with your Dad or special male friend doing something fun or special. You may wish to make a Mars Bar car together, a cardboard car together, go out and have a milkshake and have a chat together, listen to your favourite song together or perhaps wash the car together.

Extra Spots

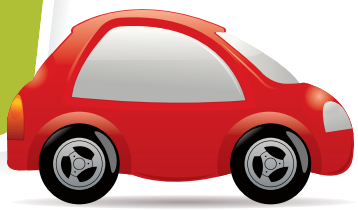
For part of your second week you might like to arrange a special early evening time where the dads can come and join in the fun. This could be an opportunity to have a dress up theme, allowing both children and dad to come and dress up and have fun together, e.g. footy or sports themed night.

Appendix/Resources

Books

'Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.'

Emilie Buchwald



Guess How Much I Love You?
Sam McBratney
Candlewick, 2008

The Ten Best Things About my Dad
Christine Loomis
Scholastic, Inc., 2004

The Night Before Father's Day
Natasha Wing
Grosset & Dunlap;
Original edition, 2012

Just Me and My Dad
Mercer Mayer
Random House Books for Young Readers, 2001

What Dads Can't Do
Douglas Wood
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers; 1st edition, 2000

'Every time I think of you, I thank my God.'

Philippians 1:3

'Toot toot, chugga chugga, big red car'
Toot Toot - The Wiggles
ABC Music, 1998

'The wheels on the bus'
The Best of Playschool
ABC for Kids, 1993

'Roary'
Ready Set Go: Roary the Racing Car
USM Junior - Amazon

'Take you riding in my car car'
Kidsongs - Car, boats, trains and planes
Kidsong

'It's so nice to have a cuddle'
Play School in the Car
ABC for Kids, 1997

Music & Rhymes

'Kids: they dance before they learn there is anything that isn't music.'

William Stafford

Take Home Spot

One-on-one time

Spend some time this week with your Dad or special male friend doing something fun or special. You may wish to make a Mars Bar car together, a cardboard car together, go out and have a milkshake and have a chat together, listen to your favourite song together or perhaps wash the car together.

Week 1

Take Home Spot

One-on-one time

Spend some time this week with your Dad or special male friend doing something fun or special. You may wish to make a Mars Bar car together, a cardboard car together, go out and have a milkshake and have a chat together, listen to your favourite song together or perhaps wash the car together.

Week 2